

December 10, 2024

Dear Students, Staff and Families:

On Monday, November 25, 2024, the Colchester Board of Education voted to approve a “school within a school” magnet program at Bacon Academy. While this is an exciting opportunity for the Colchester Public Schools, we recognize that anything new or different can bring about a level of anxiety or fear. It is our hope that the following answers to FAQ’s we have received help increase your understanding of the program and quell any concerns that you may have whether they are about financial impact, program offerings or out of town students attending Bacon Academy.

When did the district talk about the magnet school?

Please click here for a detailed history. [BA Magnet Announcements/Discussions](#)

What was shared by Mrs. Begué at the Board Meeting on January 9, 2024?

Please click here for a summary. [BA Magnet Presentation Notes from BOE Meeting 1.9.24](#)

Please click the following link to the presentation. [Bacon Academy Magnet Presentation](#)

Does this mean that Bacon Academy would become a magnet school and anyone from any town could attend Bacon?

The BA magnet school would operate as a "school within a school," offering specialized magnet programs. To attend, students would need to apply, and admission would be determined through a state-managed lottery system. Once enrolled, students must remain enrolled in magnet school courses to continue their attendance.

Would magnet school students take classes with non-magnet students?

All magnet school students would be Bacon Academy students. This means that they would take the core curriculum classes in the main building with everyone else and be full participants in all Bacon activities.

Could Colchester students attend the magnet school?

Colchester students may apply to the magnet school and will go through the lottery process. However, no more than 25% of students in any magnet program can be from the host community.

What does this mean for activities and athletics?

As all magnet school students would be Bacon Academy students, they would be eligible to try out for athletic teams, participate in after school clubs, audition for roles in drama productions and music ensembles, etc.

Would out-of-district students be expected to adhere to the rules of Bacon Academy?

As all magnet students are Bacon Academy students, they would be held to the same academic and behavioral standards. The magnet school and associated programs may also have higher

standards in some instances. For example, you may need a minimum grade in some prerequisite courses before enrolling in the EMT class.

What diploma would magnet students receive at graduation?

They would receive a Bacon Academy diploma and a certificate of completion from the magnet school.

Is this the first time that Bacon Academy has enrolled students from other towns?

When Bacon Academy opened in 1803, it drew students from across the country, and was a regional high school well into the 20th century. Bacon Academy was also one of the first schools to educate students of color and gained interest from students and families nationwide. More recently, the school has accepted students on a tuition basis from Norwich, Franklin and Bozrah.

Do we have room for additional students and programs?

Bacon Academy was built to accommodate approximately 850 students in the main building. As such, the school has capacity for magnet students in our classrooms, cafeteria, and library media center. In terms of space for these specialized programs, a grant will be utilized to cover the cost of demolition of the portables behind the gym and construction of a metal building with classrooms, a lab space, and garage bay for specialized equipment.

For context, Bacon had 907 students in 2014, 816 students in 2017, 772 students in 2020, and 661 in 2023.

How can the town afford this?

The Colchester Public Schools would receive tuition for out-of-district students to offset operating costs in both the magnet and general education program. Colchester would not be responsible for providing transportation.

Could special education students attend the magnet school?

Yes. Magnet schools are part of the public education system and are required by federal law, specifically the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to provide appropriate services and accommodations to students with disabilities. Colchester Public Schools would not be responsible for the cost of these services.

Do you have a copy of the application that was submitted to the Department of Education?

Please click here : [Magnet School Application](#)

What are the proposed pathways of the magnet school?

The proposed pathways align with coursework in the following public service fields: Fire, Medical, Criminal Justice/Forensics, Education and National Security.

How much will it cost to operate?

The application submitted by Colchester Public Schools identified the total estimated cost to operate the school would be \$599,063. This estimate is based upon the program having 160 students. Assuming a conservative tuition revenue of \$13,315 per student per year, Colchester would bring in \$1,597,800 and spend \$599,063 netting \$998,737. This money would be used to offset the costs of running Bacon Academy.

What benefits do students gain from joining the magnet school?

Industry standard credentials such as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Firefighter 1, Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), college credits through the University of New Haven, real-world training and application via shadowing, early exposure to particular career fields of interest.

How does the magnet school benefit Colchester?

The magnet school will positively impact Bacon Academy's enrollment, and new facilities on campus will be built to house the programming. The magnet school offers additional access to programs and pathways. Our collaboration with the University of New Haven will expand our current college partnership program and offer additional dual enrollment opportunities for students to earn college credit. Additionally, magnet students will have the opportunity to earn industry-standard credentialing before graduating high school.

An increase in enrollment will also increase access to courses currently offered at Bacon Academy, lead to the expansion of elective courses, and to the restoration or stability of sub-varsity athletic programs, clubs and activities.

When will the magnet school open? How are students selected to attend?

Regional School Choice Office (RSCO) applications opened December 3, 2024 for students to enroll for the 2025-2026 school year. Students are chosen through a lottery process run by the state, independent of CPS staff.

Do you have a copy of the presentation delivered at the Board meeting on November 25, 2024?

Please click the following link to the presentation: [Bacon Academy Magnet Update](#).

We hope this information is helpful, and look forward to the next chapter in the long and proud history of Bacon Academy.

Sincerely,

Daniel Sullivan